THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) The Combined Commanders' Conference of the three services was held on 20th October, 2009. The Prime Minister, Defence Minister and National Security Adviser attended the Conference. Many important issues were discussed in the meeting. In view of the sensitiveness of the matter, the details cannot be disclosed on the floor of the House.

Protection of Indian fishermen and their boats by Coast Guard

2185. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian fishermen are harassed and Indian fishing boats are being seized by foreign navies frequently;

(b) if so, the number of fishing boats seized and fishermen put in prisons by foreign navies during the last one year;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Indian Coast Guard has not accorded due protection to Indian fishermen and their boats in Indian waters; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to improve Coast Guard activity to check seizure of Indian boats and fishermen by foreign navies along Indian coasts?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) Indian fishermen are generally apprehended by foreign navies when they have been engaged in fishing inside their territorial waters. As per records in Navy, 35 Indian fishing boats with 200 fishermen have been apprehended by Pakistani Navy and 31 fishing boats with 123 fishermen have been apprehended by Sri Lankan Navy this year. Indian Coast Guard aircrafts and ships carry regular patrols to prevent Indian fishing boats crossing the International Maritime Boundary Lines (IMBL) and also conduct 'Community Interaction Programme' to inform the fishermen on the perils of cross border fishing.

Modernization/technical upgradation of ordnance factories

2186. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of modernization/technological upgradation programme of defence ordnance factories during the next five years; and

(b) the factory-wise capital investment envisaged for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M.M. PALLAM RAJU): (a) and (b) Modernization and capacity augmentation of production facilities in OFB are taken up based on the long-term requirements of weapons, ammunitions armoured vehicles etc. of armed forces and para military forces, as well as to absorb new technologies. The details of the modernization plan for the next five years are given in Statement.